

true Snipe-form from the Eroline stirp, or do the Woodcocks, the Snipes, the Jack-Snipe, and the Chatham Island Snipe merely represent so many sudden mutational forms derived from a common but independent Scolopacine stock?

(5) The so-called Painted Snipe (*Rhynchæa*) is neither Scolopacine nor Ralline. It is, however, Limicoline, possibly a surviving relic of a primitive Limicoline stock.

(6) Judging from the slight change in the relative proportions of the constituent bones of the pectoral limb and the absence of any signs of degeneration in the carina of the sternum, the diminishing powers of flight in *C. pusilla* is not a matter of long standing.

(7) *Comocorypha pusilla* and its antipodean allies are "living fossils." They belong, strictly speaking, not to the present, but to a past geological period. The fact that they still exist and that we are still privileged to see them "in the flesh" is an 'accident,' the result of the isolation of the Chathams, Aueklunds, and Snares, and their consequent freedom until recent times from carnivorous animals. They have persisted in this their last ultra-southern retreat beyond, so to speak, the allotted span of their race, and we may reasonably regard this generalised genus of "Snipes" as having formerly a much more extended distribution.

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XXXVI.—*Note on the Nestling Plumage of the Asiatic Golden Plover* (*Charadrius dominicanus fulvus*). By MAUD D. HAVILAND.

THE young of this species was first described by Mr. H. L. Popham (*Ibis*, 1898, p. 512) from specimens that he obtained on the lower Yenesei. He describes it as being more spotted, with white about the sides of the head and neck, than are the young of *Charadrius apricarius*.

On July 20, 1914, I obtained four newly-hatched chicks from an identified nest on the tundra near Golchika, lower

Yenesei. In comparing them with such specimens of the common Golden Plover as I have been able to obtain, it is apparent that in both species the markings follow the same pattern, but in different proportions. In this they differ from the chick of *Squatarola squatarola*, whose markings follow no definite pattern. In the young *C. apricarius* there is a yellow tract immediately above and behind the eye. Above this and following the same curve there is a more or less well-defined black streak. Upon the latter and much constricted at the centre over the eye, is a whitish streak. This white streak varies much in different individuals. Sometimes it is hardly marked; at other times it is quite distinct. In the latter case it seems to occur together with a white spot at the base of the upper mandible, and with a certain proportion of grey mingled with the mottling of the nape. Under the eye is a very well-defined pale patch bounded below by a broad black stripe margined with yellow, which distinguishes the down of the cheek from that of the throat.

In *C. fulvus* the white patch above the orbit has greatly increased in width until the black and yellow bands below it have been, as it were, crowded together on to the eyelid, and instead of lying parallel to one another, they have broken alternately to dovetail, like two cogs, to use a mechanic's simile, which have meshed together. Below the eye the black and yellow band has shrunk to a broken streak, and there is no division between the white down of the throat and that of the cheek. The body-down is more mixed with grey than in the western species, but the longitudinal dorsal bands are not well defined.

The yellow of the down is of a different tint in the two species, being ochre in *C. apricarius* and gamboge in *C. fulvus*. The suggestion has been made to me that the head of *C. apricarius* is stouter and broader than that of *C. fulvus*, but that appearance would depend much on after-treatment of the skin.